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ABSTRACT

This manual, intended for community agency personnel who supervise students in undergraduate field placements, presents suggestions to aid the supervisor in providing the student with a valuable and rewarding experience which will also be of value to the agency. Issues are presented in sections reflecting the common sequence of events in a fieldwork placement, i.e., selection interview, contract formation, supervision and training, feedback/communication, evaluation, and closure. The process and purpose of selecting a student for agency placement are addressed, including suggestions for student orientation to the agency. The purposes and possible contents of a learning contract are delineated. The supervisor-student relationship is discussed and the developmental processes of the student in field placement are described. The importance of evaluations for students is discussed, and suggestions are given for evaluation standards. The process of terminating the fieldwork experience is also considered. Descriptions of fieldwork programs at San Francisco State University, a field placement agreement form, and a student final evaluation form are provided in the appendices. (WAS)

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FIELDWORK SUPERVISOR'S MANUAL

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Selection Interview	3
Contract Formation	5
Supervision and Training	7
Feedback / Communication	9
Evaluation	10
Closure	12
Appendices	13 - 16

Introduction

Undergraduate education is becoming increasingly relevant and contemporary for today's students through university programs which integrate experiential learning in the major field within the undergraduate curriculum. Undergraduate field placements, supervised by community agencies and approved by university faculty, offer academic credit to students who learn knowledge and skills appropriate to their discipline from their participation in real situations in the community. Crucial to the effectiveness of this form of undergraduate education is the guidance that the individual student receives from both university faculty and agency staff, guidance towards the goal of integration of personal experiences with academic learning.

Thus the supervision of undergraduate students engaged in academic field placements in the community agencies is recognized as a critical element in the total learning process occurring each semester through the fieldwork courses offered at San Francisco State University. Insofar as the student learns to apply the theoretical knowledge and basic skills gained in the campus academic setting to situations in the community, the experience becomes a testing ground for personal efficacy and future career aspirations. Moreover, students often develop deep personal commitment to their fieldwork, regarding it with pride and love. Therefore, it seems clear that there is an especially sensitive nature to the supervisory relationship, which can make the experience either highly enriching and mutually beneficial to both agency and student, or if it is less constructive, the experience could fail to contribute to the professional and personal growth of the student, and also be of little benefit to the agency. It is with this notion in mind that this Supervisors' Manual was conceived and developed. A group of university fieldwork faculty and community agency supervisors gathered together for a

series of meetings on issues in fieldwork supervision and training. The content of this manual reflects these discussions of supervisors and instructors. We hope that the suggestions which it presents will enable the agency supervisor to provide the student with a valuable and rewarding experience which will also be of significant value to the agency.

This manual is organized in various sections which reflect the usual sequence of events in a fieldwork placement. You, as the supervisor, may find it useful to refer back to this manual from time to time during the student's fieldwork placement. Should you have any questions or considerations which are not addressed in the manual, please feel free to contact the fieldwork coordinator, Rosemarie Bowler, Psychology Department, San Francisco State University, (415) 469-1103 or leave a message at 469-2167.

Selection Interview

Your agency may have specific requirements for students who will be accepted to work in programs with your staff in serving your particular clientele. You will probably wish first to meet and talk with a student in order to gain some impression of where and how this person would fit in your agency's program. It is appropriate in a selection interview to talk frankly with the student about your agency's selection criteria and also to encourage the student to seek from you information which should aid his/her decision making about joining your agency. Of course this meeting should not have all the pressure of a salaried job application interview, as the student will be volunteering time to your agency in return for its learning opportunity. Nevertheless, going through a selection process is always anxiety provoking, and you will get the clearest impression of a student's potentialities by minimizing the stress of the situation and helping the student to feel at ease.

Because a selection interview is also often the first formal contact between the student and the agency, it is imperative that orientations and expectations of both the student and the agency be explicitly discussed and clarified. The kinds of experiences sought by the student, as well as the specific activities which can be made available to the student by the agency should be discussed as fully as possible. A tour of the agency and introductions to staff members with whom the student will be working will aid in the orientation process. After arriving at a mutual agreement, subsequent meetings between you and the student may be useful in further defining and clarifying the student's learning goals and objectives.

In Appendix A you will find course descriptions of the various fieldwork programs in the Psychology Department at San Francisco State University which

will give you some information on each particular fieldwork course, the objectives and requirements. If you have any questions for the instructors of your student, please contact the instructor at the University. Also, should any difficulties arise regarding a field placement, it is always appropriate to seek a joint problem solving meeting including you, the supervisor, and the academic instructor. Feedback from the agency is extremely valued by us, the University fieldwork faculty, and will aid greatly in integrating the student's learning in your agency with learning offered in the classroom. We, as university instructors, actively seek a close working relationship with agency personnel who provide instruction in the community.

After issues regarding the student's responsibilities are clarified, it will be appropriate to begin the formation of a fieldwork contract.

Contract Formation

A learning contract or clearly stated agreement among student, agency and academic instructor serves several useful purposes:

1. The contract can clearly describe supervisor/student roles and academic and agency goals.
2. The contract can be an individualized statement regarding the learning the supervisor expects of the individual student.
3. The contract can be instrumental in the final evaluation process, as it will enable student and supervisor to assess progress in terms of initially stated goals and objectives.
4. The contract can provide a form for liaison between agency and university.
5. A copy of the learning contract can become part of the student's record at the university and may be used to document the student's fieldwork arrangement.
6. A contract might include:
    a. brief description of the specific activities to be engaged in by the student in the agency.
    b. operationalized learning goals and objectives developed jointly by the supervisor and the student.
    c. method of supervision, including length and frequency of meeting.
    d. length of placement, including starting and termination dates, and agreed upon holidays and vacation.
    e. specified hours and days the student will work.
    f. method of evaluation.

Please note, however, that although the contract includes specific goals and objectives, these goals and objectives may be redefined depending on the student's acquisition of new skills. The contract might be seen as an 'open'

contract, assuming that the students' individualized learning is a continuing process, and not static. Therefore, it is suggested that a periodic examination of the contract be undertaken, and that learning objectives and goals be redefined whenever appropriate.

See Appendix B for a sample contract.

You, the supervisor, are responsible for orienting the student to the agency, unless a formal training program provides this service. Following this initial orientation, it is then extremely important to begin the supervisory relationship. It is essential that supervision of student interns be continuous and regular, and that the previously arranged schedule not be violated by either the student or the supervisor. Beginning students in particular may not be aware of the benefits of direct supervision.

The supervisor is both a professional role model and a source of information for the intern. The supervisor may aid the student by clarifying the institutional political hierarchy, the philosophy and the climate of the agency, as well as explain any current problems or changes in the functioning of the staff. Also, the supervisor's knowledge of career dimensions and opportunities, and his/her point of view regarding the current state of the field will contribute to the student many valuable insights. In supervisory sessions the student should be encouraged to explore questions in many areas related to becoming or being a professional. Supervision of students should differ from staff meetings by emphasizing personal reactions and impressions and not be solely task and performance oriented. In working with undergraduates, it is particularly desirable to be concerned with the student's personal development which so often parallels the development of professional values and abilities. Occasionally, students may feel they are not worthy of receiving so much "personal" attention from a busy supervisor. However, dealing openly and directly with such developmental concerns will undoubtedly ensure a more satisfactory and higher level experience for both student and supervisor.

As a professional role model, it is equally important that supervisors be aware of their own biases and limitations. Supervisors are encouraged to

openly communicate these to the students. An honest and thorough examination of your time commitments and constraints may result in a decision to delegate some supervisory responsibility to another staff member or possibly an advanced graduate student. It is preferable, however, to have a permanent supervision assignment made before the student begins his placement with you. Also, when your personal knowledge in an area outside of your specialty is limited, it is desirable to refer the student to such other resources as various staff members or the literature.

Although a formal final evaluation customarily occurs near the termination of the placement, an evaluation process should give clear feedback, both positive and negative, regarding his/her performance throughout the course of the placement. Additionally, it is desirable to encourage the student to provide feedback, as well, as it is essential that you are aware of his/her professional and personal concerns. Students typically seem to pass through various stages during the placement, which, when recognized and understood, can be dealt with in a way which contributes both personal and professional growth. These stages are frequently experienced as: 1) initial trepidation; 2) enthusiasm; 3) depression; and 4) insightful learning, and are analogous to the developmental stages most health care professionals experience. Another way of conceptualizing the developmental processes of the student in fieldwork placement is:

Stage 1) Bright eyed and bushy tailed.

Stage 2) Overwhelmed and feeling out of control.

Stage 3) Gaining mastery, but doesn't know it.

Stage 4) Gaining mastery and knows it.

Stage 5) Ready to move on!

With this in mind, the supervisor can be alert to the fact that these personal feelings and experiences are not unique, and might help him/her to explore and evaluate his/her reactions. The resolution of such concerns, however, can only occur in an atmosphere of support, trust and openness. Therefore, it is essential that the supervisor strive to maintain such an interpersonal environment with the fieldwork student.

Evaluation

Evaluations are extremely important to students, both personally and with regard to their future academic and career plans. A field experience is quite different from a theoretical course for a student. The fieldwork experience requires a unique dedication and a special type of motivation from a student. Not only will a student use his intellectual abilities, but will become emotionally involved as well. Students commonly feel they have given much of themselves. They have allowed themselves to become vulnerable, and they have worked hard. Therefore, it is especially important that their efforts be acknowledged and rewarded. Thus, the evaluation should be completed with thought and care, and kept on file for future reference.

In preparing for the student evaluation, you may wish to:

1. Refer back to the learning contract and specified learning goals and objectives.
2. It is useful to decide an evaluation standard which is convenient and appropriate. Examples of some evaluation standards are:
    a. a comparison with other undergraduate fieldwork students you have worked with, with similar academic standing.
    b. a comparison with beginning level staff members.
    c. a comparison with the student's skills and competencies when entering the placement contrasted to his exit level skills and competencies.

Please make a note on your written evaluation which standard you have used.

It is suggested that a completed final evaluation be discussed at the last supervisory meeting. If, however, you anticipate difficulties with any aspect of the evaluation process, you may wish to reserve more than one

meeting in order that any questions or feelings about the evaluation may be resolved.

It would again be useful to actively seek feedback from the student during or after the assessment procedure. The student can be given the opportunity to agree or disagree with the accuracy of the evaluation. Also, the supervisor should be sure that the student understands exactly what is being communicated in the evaluation. Finally, it would be beneficial to address the student's personal feelings, and the effect of this evaluation on future academic or career plans.

See Appendix C for sample evaluation form.

Closure

The actual process of termination of the fieldwork experience can be difficult for students and staff members, as well. Therefore, as supervisor you will need to be prepared to help students work through their closure efforts with clients, staff, and themselves. Occasionally students will consistently (or sporadically) return to work in the agency. Often this reflects a lack of ability to deal directly with closure. Recognizing the difficult feelings being experienced by the student may make it possible for him/her to bring the field placement to a successful and certain conclusion.

It is also important that the agency recognize the student's right to leave. Be sure the student is not made to feel guilty for leaving clients and or program, but rather, is recognized and openly appreciated for the contributions he/she has made. A rush toward premature termination of a placement is another way to avoid dealing with the feelings generated by ending an important experience.

We hope that calling attention to this difficult area will be useful to you and your staff, as well as to all of our students.

APPENDIX A

1.)Psychology 675 PRE-CAREER EXPLORATION IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Drs. Ken Bartelme Harvey Peskin Robert Suczek

This is a one-year course of intensive study integrated with fieldwork and supervision in small groups which are modeled after a clinical staff conference. It is an intensive experience in clinical psychology for students who want to explore whether this is the career direction they wish to pursue. The student will spend 16 hours per week in a fieldwork agency and will produce four work-products during the year: 1.A compendium of journal articles relating to the fieldwork. 2. A personal journal dealing with the field experience. 3. A study of some aspect of the clinical experience. 4. A study of some aspect of clinical psychology (or any helping profession) as a profession.

2.)Psychology 558 & 559 Field Services and Field Services Seminar

R. Bowler

Psychology Field Services is aimed at allowing a student engaged in the general psychology undergraduate major to augment their coursework with a course in fieldwork. A student may enroll in Field Services for 2 - 4 units, depending on hours of fieldwork spent in a community agency (between 4 and 12 hours per week). A bi-weekly seminar on campus is providing some supervision on campus in addition to giving the students a brief overview of different psychological services as applied in the community. Professional issues are discussed as they apply to the particular fieldplacements students are working in. Students are required to keep a journal of both objective and subjective nature, relating observations arising in their fieldwork and feelings and processes experienced during the assignment. Students are expected to learn an overview of applied psychological services in the seminar, and make connections to how theory is integrated in praxis.

3.)Psychology 672 Alternate Psychology Major

Dr. S. Rauch

The Alternate Psychology Major,"APM" permits a selected group of undergraduate students to complete an entire psychology major by combining community fieldplacements with concurrent accompanying campus coursework. The classroom portion of APM utilizes the students' field experience as an avenue for exploring and applying general psychological theory and basic methodology. Course assingments involve carrying out observations or research studies in the field placement setting, as well as examining historical and theoretical implications of agency practices. APM students typically work in field agencies from ten to twenty-five hours per week (for 3 to 6 units of academic credit) and also meet in the classroom on campus six hours a week for the academic portion of the program.

The instructors of these fieldwork programs may be reached by calling the Psychology Department Office: 469-2167

SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY
Psychology Department

1600 Holloway Avenue
San Francisco, Ca. 94132

FIELD PLACEMENT AGREEMENT

The following student:
Name:_____ Year Level and Major_____

Address:_____ Phone:_____
is placed as a psychology field work student at:
Name:_____ Address:_____

Phone:_____for a total of_____hours per week for the academic year 19___. The student will work on the following days_____ _____during the hours of_____. She/he will have experience in at least the following activities:

_____

_____

_____

What goals and objectives would you like to see the student accomplish during his placement?

_____

_____

Her/his primary supervisor will be:_____

Title and Degree:_____

The primary supervisor will agree to meet_____hours per week in direct supervision with the student.

Additional supervisors will be:

Name:_____ Title and Degree:_____

The primary supervisor will complete an objective comprehensive evaluation form assessing the field work student's performance at the end of the placement.

The field placement will commence_____and terminate_____.

(The academic semester begins_____and ends_____.)

Signatures:

_____ _____
Primary Supervisor & Date Field Work Student & Date

_____
Field Work Instructor & Date

Department of Psychology

Final Evaluation of Student Intern

Student _____ Name and title of supervisor _____

Agency _____ Number of weeks worked _____

Average hours worked per week _____

This final evaluation of your student intern is designed to provide a process for identifying and assessing the student's learning and growth during this past semester in your agency. This evaluation is extremely important to the student. The instructor will use it as a tool to evaluate the student's fieldwork experience learning. Please indicate which rating standard you used in this evaluation, whether you compared the student to his/her entry level skills, other undergraduate students you have had, or beginning level staff members.

DIRECTIONS FOR RATINGS:

Please record the student's degree of effectiveness by writing the appropriate number (1-5) in the blank before each question. Use a 0 if there has been no opportunity to observe the skill or if it is not relevant to the field setting.

1	2	3	4	5
somewhat ineffective	minimally effective	moderately effective	very effective	highly effective

I Relations With Others

____ 1. Ability to communicate with staff

____ 2. Ability to communicate with clients

Comments _____

_____

II Supervision

____ 1. Ability to utilize supervision constructively

____ 2. Openness to criticism

____ 3. Seeking and using help

Comments _____

_____

III Personal Qualities

____ 1. Decision making

____ 2. Trust and confidentiality

____ 3. Initiative

____ 4. Creativity

____ 5. Dependability

____ 6. Ability to learn

____ 7. Sensitivity to professional ethics

Comments _____

_____

IV Skills

____ 1. Ability to utilize direction
____ 2. Analyzing problems
____ 3. Counseling
____ 4. Effective listening
____ 5. Nonverbal communication
____ 6. Organizing and carrying out assignments
____ 7. Self evaluation
____ 8. Verbal communication

Comments_____

_____

V General

____ 1. Attitude toward work performed
____ 2. Acts appropriately to his/her role in agency
____ 3. Contribution to agency
4. Overall quality of performance
____ -At the beginning of the placement
____ -At the end of the placement

Comments_____

_____

What are the student's strengths?

_____

_____

In what areas does the student need improvement?

_____

_____

Please use the following scale to answer the next three questions.

Not at all Beyond expectations
1 2 3 4 5

____ 1. To what extent did the student meet the goals/objectives of the initial contract/agreement?
____ 2. To what extent did the student fulfill the supervisor's expectations?
____ 3. Considering the student's individual change, how would you rate his/her progress?
4. Would you be willing to take this student again? yes/no/maybe
5. Should the student pursue a career in this field?

Uncertain Very Definitely
1 2 3 4 5

Please return the completed evaluation to Rosemarie Bowler, Dept. of Psychology, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, Ca. 94132. Thank you.